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National Implementation Plan — LEA IT Census Phase I of the Database for Assessment of Requirements and Tactics (DART)

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NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN — LEA IT CENSUS

Phase I of the Database for Assessment of Requirements and Tactics (DART)

1.0 Objective

Phase I of the Database for Assessment of Requirements and Tactics (DART) offers the National Guard Bureau Counterdrug (NGB-CD) Programs a 'Survey Research' based method of determining the Information Technology (IT) capabilities of Law Enforcement Agents (LEA) involved in counterdrug operations. This document defines a region-based strategy for deploying the DART IT Census. The Counterdrug Coordinators (CDCs) serve as the central point of contact for deploying this IT Census. This Implementation Plan (IP) directs all functions of the DART Phase I IT Census to be executed at the CDC level. The deployment of the LEA Census within Mississippi serves as a 'Pilot Test' [1] to determine the effectiveness of this IP. Lessons learned from that experience will also be offered to the state CDC.

2.0 Background

The CDC serves a coordination role for identifying and expending National Guard resources to assist LEA in eradicating illegal drug crops and related activities/materials. Future efforts for integrating IT (i.e., computer) based tools, such as the Mississippi Counterdrug Eradication Decision Support System (MCEDSS) and spatial data to assist in counterdrug activities will require that LEA have access to certain levels of computer resources. These counterdrug tools will be deployed via a national coordination program called the Counterdrug Geographic Regional Assessment Sensor System (CD-GRASS). In order for LEA to take full advantage of the tools in CD-GRASS a minimum baseline level of IT functionality must be available to them in the course of their daily mission. This IT baseline includes an Microsoft Windows® compatible PC operating at or above 200 MHz with a reasonable level of network connectivity. At this point it is unclear as to how many LEA currently have access to this baseline of equipment. The DART IT Census is being deployed to help NGB 1) determine the counterdrug LEA population's current level of IT functionality, and 2) to assess long range requirements for assisting LEA in improving their functionality in the CD-GRASS program.

3.0 Lessons Learned

The discipline of Survey Research offers many proven strategies for carrying out successful surveys and census. However, it must be realized that collection techniques that work well for one population may not function in the same way for other census groups. The more variation in the individual types of people to be surveyed, the more difficult it is to implement one single census design. Fink and Kosecoff note that "a well designed, easy-to-use survey always contributes to reliability and validity" in the data collected.[1] Regardless of the data collection method used, it is commonly agreed that 'simple is better'.

Through the course of conducting surveys and evaluations for naval spatial data requirements, NRL has noted several key factors in participant's responsiveness to different types of data collection methods. Based on these experiences Table 1 lists data collection methods in the order of their increasing effectiveness:

Table 1: Survey Methods

Method	Affectivity Level	Estimated % of Response
Mail/Letter	Least effective	5-10
Web Page	Slightly Improved	10-15
Email	Improved	20
Fax	Significantly Improved	40
Phone Call	Substantial Gain	60 (75-80) when combined with fax
Personal Visit	Most Effective	85-90

Unfortunately the more effective methods also turn out to be the more costly in terms of manpower and time required per database entry. Thus, our lessons learned seem to indicate that the "best" technique may require a combination of collection methods including a personal phone call followed immediately with a one-page fax. The fax must have a simple design with either check boxes, or multiple-choice answers that can be circled. The respondent is asked to "please mark the form and fax it right back". If the return fax is not received in an appropriate time frame (i.e. next day), a follow-up phone call may be required to finalize the census entry. It is often recommended that one individual with good verbal communication and data entry skills be tasked with making initial contacts for populating the database. If this person has an existing association with the respondent or offers a positive incentive for participating, the response rate increases. The CDC seems to offer a centralized point of contact for these functions. However, in some cases the CDC may find that utilizing an interim agency point of contact (i.e. Sheriff, Police Chief or Narcotics Bureau Agent) may also increase the responsiveness of the LEA.

In general, the smaller the amount of information requested of the respondent, the more likely that a response will be received. The converse also holds that the more information you ask for and the more complex the required answer, the less likely you are to receive any response. In further consideration, many fully automated data collections (i.e., email, Web Pages) have revealed disappointing results when used for initial data collection, although the use of Computer Assisted Interviewing (CATI) [2] techniques is growing in popularity and functionality. People seem to hold a negative association with the concept of raw data entry. Once a database is populated, the response levels from CATI functions increase and people seem more cooperative about updating data records that relate to them personally.

In short, the more "human" you can make the collection process, the better your chances of succeeding in collecting data. People often respond to other people, better than they do directly to computerized or mechanical interfaces. The fax is generally well received because it provides the respondent with a tangible piece of paper. Further research may offer more comparative results of the benefits to combining collection methods such as an email with fax, or a phone call and a Web Page.

4.0 Approach

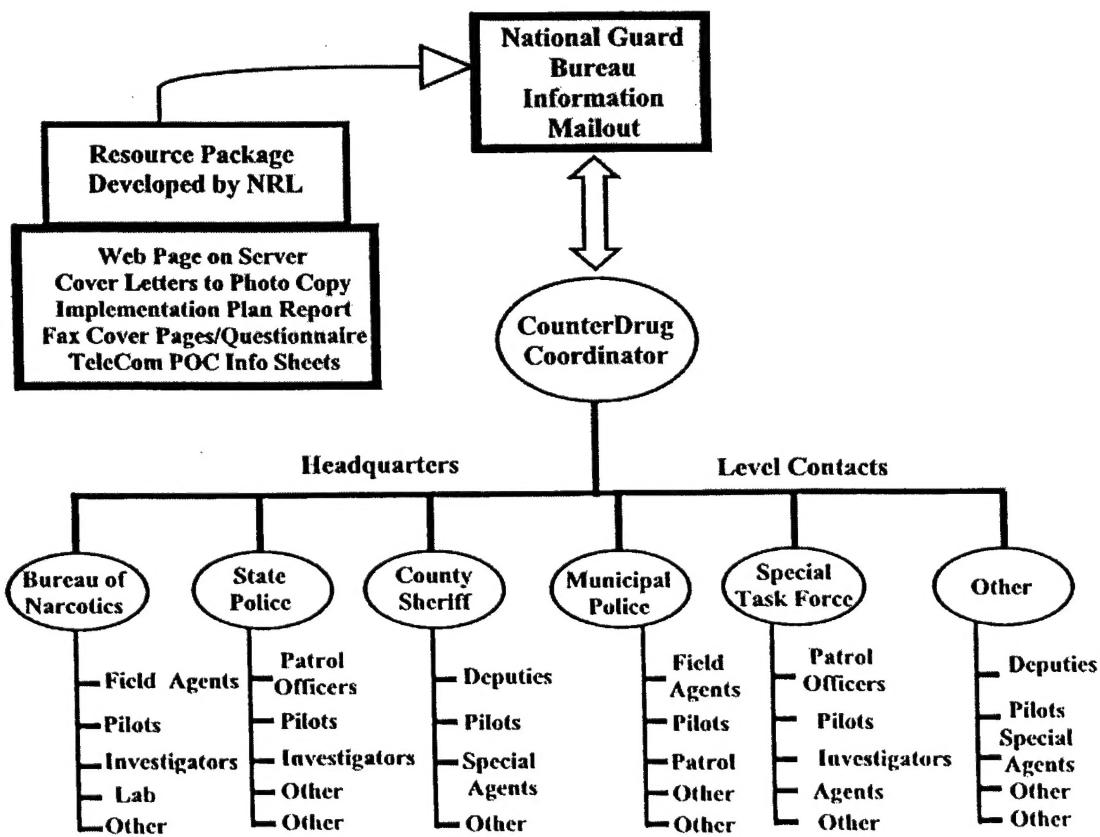
Implementation of the DART Phase I IT Census will be carried out in five primary steps:

- 1) CDC Start-Up,

- 2) Information Dissemination to LEA,
- 3) Information Assessment and Reporting to NGB,
- 4) National Information Assessment and Reporting by NGB, and
- 5) Update of records based upon currency requirements.

Collectively, these steps will insure that each of the 54 CDC receive the IT Census information and tools in a format that is easily disseminated and retrieved at local LEA levels. Under this plan the responsibility lies with the CDC for determining the most appropriate method of distributing the IT Census within their region. It is generally expected that most CDC will utilize written documentation, web-based information and/or other telecom methods (i.e., phone, fax, etc.) to collect their LEA information. Regardless of the deployment method utilized by the CDC, the determination of a successful deployment can only be measured in that individual LEA IT information records are logged in the DART IT Census Database. Since most CDC are already personally knowledgeable of LEA, a preliminary estimate given by the CDC as to the number of LEA within their jurisdiction will serve as a benchmark for determining the successful deployment of their IT Census. Monitoring these levels of completion and finally submitting the IT Census results to NGB will also be the responsibility of the CDC.

The following illustration shows a graphic representation of the communication path that might be taken by the CDC to ensure all counterdrug related LEA are contacted.



4.1 Step 1: CDC Start-Up

Goal: Insure that CDC Info is updated and CDC receives all information necessary to carry out the IT Census for their jurisdiction.

The effective deployment of the IT Census is totally dependent upon the CDC carrying out one-on-one contact directly with LEA and/or their command authorities. The method used by the NGB to contact all 54 CDC may vary depending upon their current level of contact. However, for consistency in carrying out the census, the following sub-tasks are considered necessary to execute this step of the IT Census.

- a) Mail NGB Command level letter to CDC with enclosures.
- b) Follow up with phone call to each CDC that was not contacted at the Annual CDC Conference.
- c) CDC follows instructions to login to DART Web site to review and update their own CDC info.
- d) CDC makes initial assessment of total LEA in their jurisdiction and compiles a list of known contacts.
- e) CDC reviews information package to determine its pertinence to the local mode of operations and makes edits as necessary.

4.2 Step 2: Information Dissemination to LEA

Goal: Insure that LEA receives the questionnaire in the format most conducive to a quick response.

- a) CDC determines best combination of methods to disseminate material to LEA representing only the key law enforcement agencies within the state. This step must include the CDC identifying any potential logistical and/or command authority problems and preparing a remedy. CDC should consider acquiring the assistance of key LEA that are in a position to contact other LEA for the CDC (i.e., Bureau of Narcotics Lead Agent).
- b) CDC follows instructions to distribute census information to appropriate Agency Command level or directly to LEA
- c) CDC uses phone (i.e., preferred method), fax, email or other method of verifying LEA received information. Contact should offer encouragement as to LEA benefit for participating.
- d) CDC follows up with LEA to acknowledge receipt of information or to remedy missing/incorrect information. This should be a personal contact by phone. Avoid second mail outs. It's recommended that each LEA gets some tangible response indicating NGB/CDC appreciation for their support.
- e) CDC should insure that each data record contains at least the name, address, phone, and 10 answers for the survey questions prior to terminating contact with LEA.

4.3 Step 3: Information Assessment and Reporting to NGB

Goal: Examine data collected to assess LEA IT resources within a given region.

- a) CDC will make periodic assessments of LEA information using DART statistical commands to determine shortfalls or errors in data collected.
- b) CDC will utilize DART statistical report generation tools.
- c) CDC will forward final report to NGB via electronic and/or manual delivery methods to **1Lt Randy Goss at Fax # (404) 894-6199 or contact him at (404) 894-0019.**

4.4 Step 4: National Information Assessment and Reporting by NGB

Goal: To provide NGB with a national view of IT conditions.

- a) NGB will review and coordinate any necessary changes to the CDC reports.
- b) NGB will finalize a national assessment of all LEA IT resources.

4.5 Step 5: Update Records Based on Currency Requirements

Goal: Maintain an up-to-date database to support evaluation of changes and improvements on a regional and national level.

- a) CDC should determine the period of currency for the LEA information.
- b) A plan must be developed by NGB and/or individual CDC to determine the requirements for periodically updating the LEA information.
- c) Steps must be carried out in an appropriate time frame to correct any errors in existing records and add new LEA information.

5.0 Conclusions

The CDC can effectively carry out the IT Census with the proper tools and time investment. Using a combination of phone interviews, fax, Web pages, email, and personal contacts, the CDC should be able to populate the primary LEA information for their region. It is essential that the CDC do an initial assessment of the number and type of LEA in a region to set a target for completion of the DART. Once the estimated number of LEA contacts has been reached, the CDC can continue to assess the usefulness of pursuing additional contacts. Most CDC should be able to complete the census process in approximately one month with minimal daily distraction to their existing duties.

6.0 Recommendations

NRL recommends that NGB-CD proceed with the IT Census by delivering this report with Appendix A to the Mississippi CDC. Unlike most states, it will be necessary in this test case to maintain direct contact with the CDC throughout the census process to identify problems and fixes along the way. Each problem shall be addressed in the context of 1) how Mississippi as the test pilot state should remedy the situation, and 2) how the solution will affect other states as they duplicate the process. The test case results should be reported directly to NGB-CD by the CDC to make sure any oversights are addressed prior to implementing the IT Census in other states.

7.0 Acknowledgements

The National Guard Bureau – Counterdrug Office (NGB-CD) has funded the development of the Database for the Assessment of Requirements and Tactics (DART) Phase II under NGB Primary Source Code “OMANG.” The NGB-CD will use DART to support its role of providing enhanced resources to Law Enforcement Agents (LEA) and serving as a force multiplier for civil authorities in counterdrug operations. NRL acknowledges the invaluable commitment and support provided by Lt Col George W. “Billy” Asbell, Major Michael L. Thomas and 1Lt Hugh “Randy” Goss throughout the course of the DART program. Likewise the technical assistance provided by LTC Danny Pepper, Mississippi Counterdrug Coordinator and the staff of the Mississippi National Guard Counterdrug Offices were also invaluable to the completion of these efforts.

8.0 References

[1] Fink, A. and Kosecoff, J., How to Conduct Surveys, A Step-By-Step Guide, Second Edition, SAGE Publications, London, UK, 1998.

[2] Rossi, P. H., Wright, J. D., and Anderson, A.B., Handbook of Survey Research, Academic Press, Inc., San Diego, CA,

10.0 Distribution List

National Guard Bureau-CounterDrug Office
Lt Col Billy Asbell, Deputy Chief, Special Projects Division (2 copies)
Jefferson Plaza 1, Suite 6500
1411 Jefferson Davis Highway
Arlington, VA 22202-3231

National Guard Bureau Counterdrug Office
Maj Michael Thomas, Technical Project Officer (2 copies)
1Lt Randy Goss (2 copies)
Baker 244
Mail Code 0834
925 Dalney St.
Atlanta, GA 30332-0841

Dr. Melinda Higgins (1 copy)
Mr. Nicolas Faust (1 copy)
Georgia Tech. Research Institute
241B Baker Building
Atlanta, GA 30332-0841

NRL Code 7440.2 (14 copies)
John Breckenridge

10.0 Appendix A. Counterdrug Coordinator Information Package

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I. Cover Letter to CDC Signature Copy on File

NGB-CD

25 July 2001

MEMORANDUM FOR Counterdrug Coordinators

SUBJECT: Census of LEA IT Resources

1. The National Guard is proud to be a support element for all levels of drug law enforcement and community-based organizations. We are able to provide military training, skills and assets to support law enforcement in part because of the manner in which we are involved with local law enforcement through you, our Counterdrug Coordinators (CDC). I ask for your cooperation in completing the attached survey package that will provide valuable insight to the level of computer related technology available to the various law enforcement agencies in your state.
2. This survey supports the Counterdrug Geographical Regional Assessment Sensor System (CD-GRASS) program and will pave the way for the deployment of the new National Counterdrug Enforcement Decision Support System (NCEDSS). The NCEDSS system will allow DLEA the ability to merge their existing law enforcement data with geographical information data, providing DLEA with custom spatial data mapping products that will improve mission planning, analysis and execution.
3. The enclosed CDC information package provides detailed instructions and resources that will assist you in executing this survey. Please follow the enclosed instructions and contact 1Lt Randy Goss, (404) 894-0019 with any questions concerning your immediate execution of this survey.

Encl

Michael L. Thomas
Major, USAF
Technical Project Officer

II. Instructions to CDC

Review the entire package to ensure you have a good understanding of the goal for conducting the IT assessment. Please contact 1 Lt. Randy Goss at (404) 894-0019 if you have any questions concerning this material and the IT Census.

1. Complete the enclosed CDC Regional Baseline Assessment Sheet (see attachment 1) and return it to 1 Lt. Randy Goss via fax at (404) 984-6199. Please disregard this step if you have already completed this sheet as part of a broadcast e-mail to the CDCs.
2. Collect survey information within your jurisdiction from all DLEA that actively participate in counterdrug activities. Interviews may be accomplished by one of three methods:
 - a. Phone/personal interview: Make copies of the attached IT Assessment Questionnaire and complete the one page survey for each DLEA contacted, (see attachment 2).
 - b. Fax/Email: The attached IT Assessment Questionnaire may be delivered to selected agencies for completion with the attached sample cover letter from the CDC, (see attachment 3). Fax cover sheet included, (see attachment 4). Upon completion the DLEA should fax their information back to the State Counterdrug Coordinators office.
 - c. Internet: DLEA may complete the questionnaire via the DART web site located at <http://dart.nrlssc.navy.mil/dart.html>. Web page instructions are included in the CDC tools, (see attachment 4).
3. Regardless of the method used to collect the information, the CDC should insure that DLEA information is properly updated in the DART database via the Internet as described in 2c above.

If you have any questions or problems logging into the DART web site, please call 1 Lt. Randy Goss at (404) 894-0019, or e-mail gossh@cdmail.ngb.army.mil

III. Frequently Asked Questions

Why are we conducting an IT assessment?

The National Guard Bureau Counterdrug Office was tasked to create and deploy a tool that would aid Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (DLEA) with mission information, information technology assessment and operations. The tool, currently named the Mississippi Counterdrug Enforcement Decision Support System (MCEDSS) is a software package that allows DLEA's to merge their existing arrest, seizure, eradication and other relevant data with a Geographical Information System (GIS). MCEDSS is currently being field tested in Mississippi and should be ready for deployment to the remaining States, territories and the District of Columbia starting in FY 2002. The MCEDSS system requires a certain level of Information Technology (IT) (i.e., computer support) to properly perform the intended functions. By conducting a census of the DLEA and their computer resources, we can advise you of the best location to deploy the MCEDSS system within your jurisdiction. The system will likely be renamed to the National Counterdrug Enforcement Decision Support System (NCEDSS) for the National deployment.

What is the benefit of the IT assessment?

There are several benefits to the conducting this assessment. 1) Evaluating where the NCEDSS should be deployed. 2) Expediting the deployment process 3) The assessment provides agencies an opportunity to upgrade resources if necessary 4) Allows Counterdrug Coordinators to reinforce contacts with DLEA and generate new ones in the process of developing short and long-term plans for distributing National Guard resources.

How long should it take to conduct this survey?

The answer to that question is determined by which method you use to conduct the survey. There are three ways to do this: Phone/Personal Contact, Fax, or by Internet connection. There are only 10 questions pertaining to IT resources and 13 questions used to gather DLEA and agency contact data. We have made every effort to make it easy to follow and use. On average, it should take 5-10 minutes to complete for each DLEA.

What tools are available to conduct the IT Assessment?

The following methods are available to support conducting the survey.

- 1) Phone/Personal Contact – The IT Assessment Questionnaire supports Phone or other personal contacts with DLEA. As they are contacted, the DLEA can write in the contact information or answer verbally to the CDC. A hard copy of this sheet is provided to CDC for photocopying and distributing to the DLEA. (See attachment 2)
- 2) Fax/Memorandum – A Fax Cover Sheet, Draft Memorandum are provided for the CDC facilitating DLEA data entry. The CDC will fax, mail or email the DLEA the questionnaire with a request that the information be returned by the same method if possible. (See attachment 3)
- 3) Internet Connection – The Web-Page Instructions sheet provides a concise description of the steps needed to complete the census via a Web Browser. (See attachment 4)

IV CDC Regional Baseline Assessment Sheet

Please complete the following questions and return this fax to 1Lt Randy Goss. The purpose of this questionnaire is to determine the approximate number of law enforcement agencies you will contact to conduct this survey of LEA IT resources.

1. As the CDC for the state/commonwealth of _____, what is the average number of DLEA that you support for Counterdrug operations on an ongoing basis?

2. Are there any law enforcement agencies within your state that could serve as a central point of between various LEA offices within your state? Please identify these organizations below, if any.

Name: _____ Agency: _____

Name: _____ Agency: _____

Name: _____ Agency: _____

Others: _____

3. How many agencies do you plan on contacting for this IT Census?

4. Notes/Comments:

5. Upon completion of these questions, please fax or e-mail this page back to:

Return Fax Information

To: 1 Lt Randy Goss
Fax #: (404) 894-6199
Phone #: (404) 894-6199

gossh@cdmail.ngb.army.mil

V. IT Assessment Questionnaire

LEA Name: _____ Rank: _____
Agency: _____ Title/Position: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____ DSN: _____
Fax: _____ Email: _____
Web-page Address: _____

1. Do you have access to a computer to support your daily LEA duties? Yes No

2. What type of computer is it? Desktop/Laptop Personal Computer Macintosh
 High End Workstation Internet PC Terminal

3. What is the speed at which your computer functions? <=200MHz >200MHz

4. What kind of operating system does it use? Windows 95, 98 or 2000 Windows NT
 Mac OS UNIX Other/Unknown

5. Is your computer connected to a network? Yes No

6. What kind of network connection does it have? Modem/Phone Line Local Router
 High Speed Multiplex Other/Unknown

7. What speed is your network connection? 56K or greater
 T1 or greater Other/Unknown

8. Does this computer have browser software to connect to the World Wide Web? Yes No

9. What kind of browser software do you have? Netscape Navigator
 Internet Explorer Other/Unknown

10. Have you ever viewed a Webpage using this computer? Yes No

VI. Draft Memorandum for Law Enforcement Agents
NGB-CD (500-2b1) July 25 2001

MEMORANDUM FOR Counterdrug Law Enforcement Agents

SUBJECT: Survey of Law Enforcement Information Technology Resources

1. The National Guard is proud to be a support element for all levels of drug law enforcement. As Counterdrug Coordinator (CDC) for the State of <Insert State Name>, my primary interest is in assisting Law Enforcement Agents (LEA) like yourself who are directly involved in counterdrug operations.
2. The National Guard Counterdrug Program is developing a software tool that will enhance your counterdrug operations. The National Counterdrug Enforcement Decision Support System (NCEDSS) will allow DLEA the ability to merge their existing law enforcement data with Geographical Information Systems (GIS) data, providing DLEA with custom spatial data mapping products that will improve mission planning, analysis and execution. This new tool is currently being field tested in Mississippi with measurable success and should start being deployed to other states in 2002.
3. Your assistance is requested to complete the IT Assessment Questionnaire so we may understand the level of IT resources available to you that support your Counterdrug missions. Please return the completed questionnaire to my office via fax or e-mail.
4. Thank you for your assistance. Let me assure you that your support is vital to our long-range counterdrug mission and greatly appreciated.

Encl

SIGNATURE BLOCK

VII. Draft Fax Cover Sheet

Fax Cover Sheet

**Subject: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES
QUESTIONNAIRE**

To: _____

Agency: _____

Fax #: _____

Phone #: _____

Page 1 of 2: An IT Assessment Questionnaire Follows this page.

From: _____

Fax #: _____

Phone #: _____

Your assistance is needed in completing a national census of LEA IT resources. Knowing what kinds of computer resources are used by LEA is necessary to the National Guard Counterdrug Programs in order to provide support in the future. Please complete the attached questionnaire and return it to my office.

Thank you for your assistance.

<Insert State CDC Name>

VIII. Web-Page Instructions *For completing the* **Information Technology (IT) Census**

The following website has been established to allow the CDC the ability to interact with DLEA to accomplish the IT assessment via the Internet. Please log onto <http://dart.nrlssc.navy.mil/dart.html>. You will be prompted to enter a user name and password to allow you direct access to the DART Web Page. This login information is provided to you as a DART Security Addendum to this report. If you experience problems logging on please e-mail 1Lt. Randy Goss at gossh@cdmail.ngb.army.mil or call (404) 894-0019.

CDC Login Instructions:

1. Once logged into the Database for Requirements and Tactics (DART) Web Page, you should select the IT census button. You will be prompted to indicate whether you are an LEA or CDC. By selecting the CDC checkbox, the user will be prompted to enter username and password.
2. Each Counterdrug Coordinator has been issued a personalized user name and password which is also detailed in the DART Security Addendum. Once you login, a regional map will be displayed. Select the "Next Page" button located below the map to display your personal CDC information page. Then select the "Edit" button and change the username and password data fields during your first login session. Complete this edit session by selecting the "Save" button.
3. When you log in you can use the Edit Info function under the CDC Info button to change your user name and password or leave it the way it is currently assigned. The CDC can add or edit LEA information within their jurisdiction by using the LEA Info button. The LEA will be informed that their information has been entered into DART database automatically via e-mail, provided you entered their complete e-mail address. The message received by the LEA will contain their new user name and password.

Law Enforcement Login Instructions:

1. The DART Web Page has a generic username and password that all LEA's and CDC's must enter, as described in the CDC instruction page. Law enforcement agents should be informed of the user name and password when initial contact is made. This security measure has been instituted to protect the personal information of the DLEA. Once DLEA has been issued a temporary password they will be able to complete the IT Assessment.
2. Once logged in, the Database for Requirements and Tactics (DART) Web Page will appear. Select the ***IT Census*** button and then check the LEA box. You will be asked if this is your first time to visit this site; click the appropriate answer. If this is your first time to the DART web site you will be asked a series of questions. Please answer these questions to the best of your knowledge. These inputs will assist the National Guard Counterdrug program in better supporting you in the future.
3. Complete all required fields and click the submit button. The database will be updated and the DLEA will automatically receive a report via e-mail summarizing the data entered. The report will include their new username and password.
4. DLEA may return to this site at any time to update their data or view the data for their CDC and/or other DLEA in their jurisdiction.